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Learning Styles

I found the article interesting, as I have heard about learning styles quite a bit in the last few years or so. I remember thinking that I had always been more of a tactile learner and that I needed to break something open and learn how and why each part fits to truly understand something. While the latter part is still pretty accurate, I realized later that I just had more curiosity on certain things that happened to be more physical and grounded. There are a lot more factors into the teaching/learning relationship than the specific style someone attributes fitting them best. I know I hated history until I was a junior in high school when I had my first teacher that cared about the subject and went far more in depth with his teachings than just making sure we remembered specific dates. His passion was obvious and sparked interest in many of his students. He had a large part to play in me joining the military through some of his personal stories and the way he would teach about wars. He would make the soldiers real and read letters they had written to family back home and awards they had earned doing courageous things in battle.

I had a math teacher early in high school that made real world problems and showed how math can be used to approach certain problems. He made it far more applicable and gave the math more purpose than just a passing grade. Alternatively, I went back to college when I was 26 having not taken a math class for 8 years and that was a terrible experience. The teacher was not respected because had no passion or knowledge outside of the book she taught from. It was a very challenging term because of that, and I needed to seek outside help to understand the basics I had forgotten from nearly a decade prior. Thankfully I found a tutor that was a great teacher and could communicate multiple approaches to a problem and that helped me understand the concepts.

I think we all have our preferences when it comes to learning styles, but we can still learn regardless of style with a little effort. When I had a teacher growing up that didn’t seem to care, I noticed none of us cared either and all put in the minimum amount of work to get through the term. Unfortunately, in high school there is a lot more drama, and immaturity in the students which makes learning and teaching more difficult. This seems to foster more of a fixed mindset and led to a lot of wasted time and potential. Both parties need to be able to communicate and risk failure without much judgment to improve and create a better learning environment. These are just a few thoughts and experiences that I found more impactful than specific learning styles.